

ALPHA KAPPA  
ALPHA SORORITY

HERITAGE  
SERIES #2  
**WOMEN IN  
POLITICS**



*Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.*

HERITAGE SERIES NUMBER 2

WOMEN  
IN POLITICS

As the social revolution unfolds, one of the more dynamic aspects is increased involvement by all members of the community. In the past black women have focused their attention upon the home and the service occupations and professions.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, in an attempt to encourage young Negro women to take advantage of opportunities in all fields, is presenting a series of booklets on outstanding Negro women. It is hoped that many will be encouraged to accept the challenge of their heritage and to strive for positions of leadership.

Booklet #1, *Negro Women in the Judiciary*, was dedicated to the ten Negro women who have presided over courts in major cities.

Booklet #2 is dedicated to the black women who are serving in elected government positions. Mrs. Shirley Chisholm, of New York, as a member of the United States House of Representatives, represents the highest level in government that black women have reached.

The other women described in this booklet serve at the state or county level and most are the first black women in their relative positions.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority will prepare and distribute these heritage publications free to schools, organizations and individuals in the next few years. To secure additional copies of this booklet write to:

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.  
5211 South Greenwood Avenue  
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The following is a partial list of the Negro women who are serving at the municipal level:

Victorine Quille Adams	Councilwoman	Baltimore, Md.
Doris A. Davis	City Clerk	Compton, Calif.
Sallye Brooks Mathis	Councilwoman	Jacksonville, Fla.
Jessie G. Mitchell	Councilwoman	Gary, Indiana
Vel Phillips	Councilwoman	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Louis E. Reynolds	Alderman	Louisville, Ky.
Mary L. Singleton	Councilwoman	Jacksonville, Fla.

We would also like to acknowledge the following women who are no longer in office:

Helene Hale	Mayor	Hawaii
Frances Jones	Representative	Pennsylvania



SARAH A. ANDERSON

## **SARAH A. ANDERSON**

State Representative, Pennsylvania

Mrs. Sarah A. Anderson has represented Pennsylvania's 193rd District (Philadelphia) in the State House of Representatives since 1955. She is now serving her seventh term in office.

Mrs. Anderson is chairman of the House Health and Welfare Committee, secretary of the Appropriations Committee and a member of the Education Committee.

Among her more notable accomplishments, she includes sponsorship, or co-sponsorship, of FEPC and Fair Housing legislation, a bill to establish a junior college for Philadelphia County, and forestry and conservation measures.

Born in Jacksonville, Fla., Mrs. Anderson graduated from the Philadelphia Public Schools and Philadelphia Normal School. After graduation from Normal, she taught in the Philadelphia Public Schools.

The Representative is the widow of Dr. Adolphus W. Anderson, Sr., and the mother of six children.

In addition to her legislative duties, Mrs. Anderson is active in Philadelphia civic and cultural affairs and has been a delegate to several White House conferences.

She has been cited many times for legislative and civic excellence. Among her awards are: Emma V. Kelly Achievement Award; Community Service Plaque, National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., 1961; Award of Honor, Philadelphia Chapter, Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1962; Four Chaplains' Legion of Honor Membership, 1962, and Special Award of Merit, Philadelphia Citizens Selection Committee, 1966.



HANNAH D. ATKINS

## HANNAH D. ATKINS

State Representative, Oklahoma

Mrs. Hannah D. Atkins began her first term as a member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives in 1969 as delegate from the 97th District, Oklahoma City.

Her legislative assignments include the Appropriations, Governmental Affairs, Public Health and Welfare Committees.

Her election to the House came at the peak of a long career of activity in political and civic affairs.

Mrs. Atkins is a member of the Executive Board of the Oklahoma County Mental Health Association and the Executive Board of the Oklahoma City Symphony Society.

She is also a member of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women and the State Advisory Committee to the State Board of Education.

Mrs. Atkins is President-Elect of the Oklahoma Chapter of the Special Libraries Association. She is past-President of the Southwestern Chapter, American Association of Law Libraries, and the Visiting Nurse Association.

From 1963 to the time of her election, Mrs. Atkins was employed at the Oklahoma State Library. She was chief of the general reference division and Acting Law Librarian.

The Representative received her B.S. Degree from St. Augustine College and a bachelor of library science from the University of Chicago. She has studied law at Oklahoma City University and the University of Oklahoma.

In addition to being a librarian, she has worked as a newspaper reporter, a teacher of French and a research assistant in biochemistry.

She is married to Charles Nathaniel Atkins. They have three children.





YVONNE WATSON BRATHWAITE

## **YVONNE WATSON BRATHWAITE**

State Assemblywoman, California

Mrs. Yvonne Brathwaite was an attorney for the McCone Commission, which investigated the Watts rebellion of 1965. The experience convinced her "it was necessary to have more people committed to social change directly involved in government."

The following year she was elected to the California Assembly from the 63rd District. She was re-elected in 1968.

In her first term she served as vice chairman of the Assembly Governmental Efficiency and Economy Committee and as a member of the Finance, Insurance and Public Health Committees. She was also secretary of the Los Angeles County Delegation to the legislature.

Her second term assignments include the Finance, Insurance, Health and Welfare and Local Government Committees.

During her first term, she successfully maneuvered passage of a bill to limit garnishment of wages without a court judgment. However, it was vetoed by the Governor. She plans to re-introduce the bill.

She has been more successful with measures providing child care for needy children, improved licensing procedures, humane treatment for juveniles and disaster relief for property owners.

A practicing lawyer for 12 years, Mrs. Brathwaite has served as Deputy Corporation Commissioner for Los Angeles and as hearing officer for the Police Commission.

In private practice she has been active in several civil rights cases.

She has received the NAACP's Loren Miller Award for out-standing contributions to the California Legal System, the Sojourner Truth Award of the Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the Woman of the Year Award from Iota Phi Lambda and Zeta Phi Beta Sororities.

She is a native of Los Angeles and attended public schools there. She earned a B.A. in political science at UCLA and a J.D. at USC Law School.

She is a member of the Advisory Commission on Small Business Administration.



BESSIE ALLISON DUCHANAN

## **BESSIE ALLISON BUCHANAN**

**Former State Representative, New York**

Mrs. Bessie Allison Buchanan was elected to the New York State Assembly from New York City's 12th Assembly District in 1954. She was the first Negro woman to hold the office. Her District sent her to Albany for four consecutive terms.

When she retired from the legislature, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller appointed her to the New York State Commission on Human Rights.

As a member of the Assembly, she served on the City of New York Committee, the Committee on Public Institutions, the Social Welfare and Relief Committee and the Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging.

Mrs. Buchanan's Political success came as the result of a record of public service.

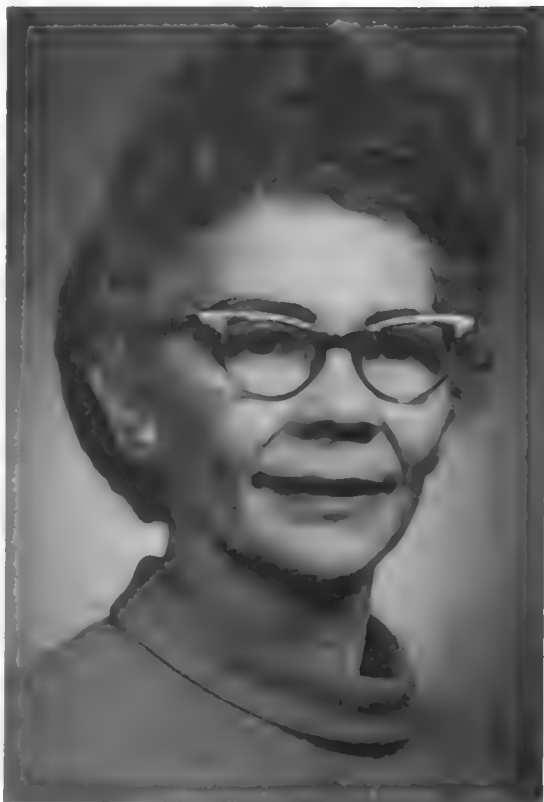
She is a former member of the board of directors of the Wyltwick School for Boys. She has served in the same capacity for Riverdale Orphanage.

In addition, she has served as local campaign and fund raising chairman for many local, regional and national organizations, including:

American Cancer Society, National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, United Negro College Fund and the Urban League.

Mrs. Buchanan also has a long list of awards and citations, including the Sojourner Truth Award of the New York Club of Business and Professional Women, the American Cancer Society, and the National Council of Negro Women.

A former actress, she is married to Charles P. Buchanan. He is chairman of the board of directors of the United Mutual Insurance Company of New York.



DE VERNE LEE CALLOWAY

## **DE VERNE LEE CALLOWAY**

**State Representative, Missouri**

Mrs. De Verne Lee Calloway was elected to her first term in the Missouri House of Representatives in 1962. She has been re-elected three times since.

She has served as Vice Chairman of the Elections Committee, and the Accounts Committee. She has been chairman of the Federal-State Relations Committee.

Mrs. Calloway also serves as a member of the Education Committee.

Her special interest is social legislation. In 1964 and again in 1966 she introduced Fair Housing Bills in the Missouri House.

She has been secretary of the legislature's Democratic Caucus.

In 1967 she led a successful fight to create a Congressional District from which Missouri might elect a Negro Congressman.

Among her present priorities is legislation to establish a State Commission on the Status of Women.

Mrs. Calloway was educated in St. Louis schools. She attended Le-Moyne College, Atlanta University and Northwestern University.

She has served on the St. Louis Commission to Investigate Price Discrimination and was a member of the First State Capitol Restoration Committee.

She is a life member of NAACP, and a member of the National Council of Negro Women, the Committee on Racial Equality, Greater St. Louis Community Council, United Church Women and the Missouri Association for Social Welfare.



SHIRLEY A. CHISHOLM

## **SHIRLEY A. CHISHOLM**

**United States Representative, Brooklyn, N.Y.**

Mrs. Shirley A. Chisholm holds the distinction of being the first black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

She won her seat in November 1968 in a race against James Farmer, former head of the Congress of Racial Equality.

Cong. Chisholm's district includes the predominantly black and Puerto Rican Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn.

This is her second elective position. Mrs. Chisholm served four years in the New York State Assembly representing the 45th Assembly District.

A professional in child education, Mrs. Chisholm has been active in politics for more than 20 years. She is a former vice president of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Political League, a consultant to the Brooklyn Coordinating Council and a member of the League of Women Voters.

Mrs. Chisholm is also President of the Brooklyn Branch of Key Women, Inc., and a former president of the Stuyvesant Community Center. She is a member of the board of the Brooklyn Home for Aged Colored People.

Her other affiliations include NAACP, National Association of College Women and the Democratic Women's Workshop.

Over the years she has received many civic and professional awards, including: Woman of Achievement, Key Women, Inc.; Certificate of Honor, John M. Coleman Junior High School; Outstanding Service in Good Government, Christian Women's Retreat and Human Relations Award, Central Nassau Club for Business and Professional Women.

Mrs. Chisholm holds a B.A. in Sociology from Brooklyn College and a Master in Childhood Education from Columbia. She also holds a professional diploma in administration and supervision from Columbia.





GEORGIA M. DAVIS

## **GEORGIA M. DAVIS**

State Senator, Kentucky

In 1966, Mrs. Georgia M. Davis lobbied in the Kentucky legislature for public accommodations and fair employment laws.

She said later, "I decided it would be more effective to be able to cast a vote myself. I filed for office against the local organization candidate in the next primary."

Mrs. Davis won against a white opponent in a Louisville senatorial district that is 50-50 in its black-white population ratio. She went on to win the general election by a 4,000-vote majority.

In the general election she carried the endorsements of the Kentucky and Louisville Education Associations, the Kentucky Medical Association, AFL-CIO and the Louisville Chamber of Commerce.

Once in the Senate, Mrs. Davis sponsored and won passage for Kentucky's first state-wide fair housing law. She also successfully sponsored legislation for pay increases for police and firemen, improved insurance regulation and improved education for the physically and mentally handicapped.

Sen. Davis is a member of the Cities and Labor Committees. She also serves on a Joint Sub-Committee on Narcotics.

Outside politics, Mrs. Davis is a member of the International Afro Musical and Cultural Foundation, SCLC, NAACP, Louisville Urban League, YWCA and Covenant Memorial Presbyterian Church.



DABY ELLIOTT

## **DAISY ELLIOTT**

State Representative, Michigan

Daisy Elliott (Mrs. Charles Bower) has been called the most prolific writer at the 1961-62 Michigan State Constitutional Convention.

A precinct delegate from Detroit, she served the convention on the Executive Branch, Rules and Regulations and Emerging Problems Committees.

She was responsible for language that led to a constitutionally created State Civil Rights Commission in Michigan.

Having seen the new Constitution adopted, she decided to help put it in effect. In 1962 she ran for and won a seat in the new House of Representatives as delegate from Detroit's 22nd District. She was re-elected in 1964, '66 and '68.

Mrs. Elliott is chairman of the House committee on Revision and Amendment of the Constitution. She is a member of the committees on Taxation, Education, Labor and Colleges and Universities.

Since her first term, she has seen passage of more than 80 bills carrying her name as sponsor or co-sponsor. In 1966 she was cited as Outstanding State Legislator.

In that same year she was cited as Outstanding Community Leader. The Michigan State Bar Association gave her a citation in 1962 as a result of her work at the Constitutional Convention.

She was given special awards, in 1963, 1965 and 1966, by the Federation for Aid to Dependent Children. In 1969 she was presented a Certificate of Award by the Committee for Student Rights in Detroit Public Schools.

Mrs. Elliott was a delegate to the 1968 Democratic National Convention and served as secretary of the Legislators' Caucus.

She is a member of the Historical Society of Michigan, National Society of State Legislators and the National Junior League. She is a founder of the Blanche E. King Foundation for the Deaf.



**ROSETTA FERGUSON**

## **ROSETTA FERGUSON**

**State Representative, Michigan**

Born in Florence, Miss., Mrs. Rosetta Ferguson was educated in schools in New Orleans and Detroit.

As a member of the Michigan legislature, one of her proudest achievements has been passage of a Fair Textbook law. It became effective in 1966.

The law requires public, private and parochial schools in Michigan to use social studies textbooks which give attention and recognition to the achievements of the ethnic and racial groups that make up the United States.

Mrs. Ferguson is chairman of the House Civil Rights Committee. She also sits on the Public Safety, Social Services and Corrections, and Roads and Bridges Committees.

A prominent businesswoman in Detroit, Mrs. Ferguson is staff manager of a real estate firm.

She was one of the founders and financial secretary of the People's Community Civic League, Inc. The organization is the sponsor of the Career Development Center.

She was a member of the Democratic State Central Committee for two years and a precinct delegate for 10 years.

She has been a Grey Lady for the American Red Cross and is a member of the NAACP and the Women's Public Affairs Committee of 1000, Inc.

She has held appointments from Governors G. Mennen Williams and John B. Swainson. In 1968 she was presented the Key to the City of New Orleans by Mayor Victor H. Schiro.



GRACE TOWNS HAMILTON

## GRACE TOWNS HAMILTON

State Representative, Georgia

Mrs. Grace Towns Hamilton is a native Atlantan and a member of a family distinguished for community service.

Elected to her first term in 1965, she was the first black woman seated in the Georgia legislature. She currently serves on the Appropriations, Education and Hygiene and Sanitation Committees.

She is a member of the Education sub-committee on common schools and secretary of the Hygiene and Sanitation Sub-committee on Nursing Homes and Homes for the Aged.

Mrs. Hamilton was executive director of the Atlanta Urban League from 1943 to 1960. When she left that position, the *Atlanta Constitution* said in an editorial that her work "represents 17 years of progress toward racial understanding. Her contributions toward development of park, school, and hospital facilities for Negroes reflected high intelligence and deep understanding as well as forceful leadership."

In the interval between the League and her election to the Legislature, Mrs. Hamilton worked as a consultant in community relations for the Community Division of the National YWCA and for Hamilton Associates.

She was appointed by President Johnson to his Citizens Advisory Committee on Recreation and Natural Beauty.

She is a trustee of both Atlanta University and Meharry Medical College.

In addition, she serves on the executive committees of the Citizens Judicial Study Commission of Georgia and the Atlanta Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal.

She is a member of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women and the boards of the Atlanta Committee for International Visitors and the Gate City Day Nursery Association.

She also sits on the Advisory Board of the Fulton County Democratic Party.

Her husband, Henry Cooke Hamilton, is Registrar of Morehouse College and a member of the Education faculty of Atlanta University.





BARBARA JORDAN

## **BARBARA JORDAN**

State Senator, Texas

Barbara Jordan was a tenth grade student at Wheatley Junior High School in Houston, Texas when she heard a speech by Atty. Edith Sampson of Chicago.

The tenth grader was so impressed by what she heard that she resolved she, too, would become a lawyer.

Miss Jordan finished the Houston public schools in the upper five percent of her class. She majored in political science at Texas Southern University and graduated Magna Cum Laude. She was also a member of the TSU debating team.

She attended law school at Boston University, graduating in 1959.

She taught briefly at Tuskegee Institute before returning home to take the bar examinations in 1960. She is now a member of the Massachusetts and Texas Bars.

Miss Jordan's political activity began with a 1960 "get-out-the-vote" campaign and the presidential election of that year.

She ran for the Texas legislature in 1962 and 1964 and lost both times. In 1966, however, a court-ordered re-districting allotted Harris County four state senators. Miss Jordan was elected with the help of a liberal coalition.

Miss Jordan was the first Negro woman to serve in the Texas senate and the first Negro to sit there since 1883. She went on to become the first Negro to chair a Senate committee and first to preside over the Senate.

Her committee assignments include Chairman, Labor and Management Relations; Vice Chairman, Privileges and Elections; Member, State Affairs, Finance, Education, Jurisprudence, Legislative, Congressional, Judicial Districts, Public Health, Military and Veterans Affairs and Youth Affairs.

The Senator is a past president of the Houston Lawyers Association and member of the American Bar Association and the Texas Trial Lawyers Association.

She is a member of the Boards of Directors of Houston's Alley Theatre and United Nations Association of U.S.A.

She is also a member of the Texas Bill of Rights Foundation, NAACP, Harris County Council of Organizations and Southern Regional Council.

In 1967, UPI named her one of the ten most influential women in Texas.



**MAE STREET KIDD**

## **MAE STREET KIDD**

**State Representative, Kentucky**

Mrs. Mae Street Kidd is one of those persons who is best described as a mover. She is a woman of varied interests and finds time for all of them.

She was a precinct worker in Louisville when the local Democratic organization asked her to run for the legislature. She was elected to the 1968-69 term in the Kentucky House of Representatives.

Early in 1968, working in cooperation with the other two Negro members of the legislature, she secured passage of a Kentucky open housing law, first in the South.

Her efforts brought Mrs. Kidd the 1968 Kennedy-King Award.

Awards are nothing new for her. In 1963 she received the Louisville Defender's Emancipation Exposition Award. She was the Defender's Kentuckian of the Year in Human Relations in 1965.

A native Kentuckian, Mrs. Kidd served overseas with the American Red Cross during World War II. After she returned to this country, she served with United Seaman's Service in Portland, Me., and New York.

From 1946 to 1964, she was director of public relations for Mammoth Life Insurance Company in Louisville. In 1964 she joined Supreme Life Insurance Company of America as an ordinary consultant in the Louisville office. She has remained with that company since her entry into politics.

Mrs. Kidd is secretary and a member of the board of the Louisville Urban League. She received that organization's Equal Opportunity Award in 1967.

She is a member of Louisville's Planning Board, Recreation and Group Division, Health and Welfare Council; League of Women Voters and the Kentucky Development Council.

She is also affiliated with the National Insurance Association. In 1966 she sold more than half a million dollars worth of life insurance.

Her legislative assignments are the Insurance and Banking Committee and the Business and Professions Committee.

She is married to J. Meredith Kidd III, a high school science teacher.



WYNONA M. LIPMAN

## WYNONA M. LIPMAN

Freeholder Essex County, New Jersey

Mrs. Wyona M. Lipman has had two full careers, one in education, the other in politics.

A resident of Montclair, N.J., Mrs. Lipman is a member of the Board of Freeholders, Essex County.

She is chairman of the Board's Hospitals Committee, vice chairman of the Legislative and Penal Committees. She is also liaison between the Board and the Essex County Children's Shelter.

In addition, she lists the Essex County Tuberculosis Sanatorium and an improved county welfare administration as items of primary concern.

Away from the board, Mrs. Lipman is a member of the Division of Public Welfare of the New Jersey State Board of Control; the Steering Committee, National Association of County Organizations; Advisory Committee, Essex County Mental Health Board, and the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Regional Drug Abuse Agency.

Mrs. Lipman has been assistant professor of French at Morehouse College, and an instructor in French in New York City High Schools. She was a special education instructor for the Montclair high schools.

She holds a B.A. from Talladega College, M.A. from Atlanta University and a Ph.D. from Columbia. She studied at the Sorbonne on a Fulbright Fellowship.

She and her husband, Mathew, have a son and daughter.



JOSEPHINE B. SNEED

## **JOSEPHINE B. SNEED**

County Commissioner  
Cook County, Illinois

Mrs. Josephine B. Sneed was originally appointed a Cook County Commissioner to complete the two years remaining of her husband's term at the time of his death.

She later won election on her own. She serves on the Finance and Public Service committees.

She takes a special interest in matters concerning Oak Forest Hospital, the County Jail and the Criminal Court.

Mrs. Sneed is a founder of the Women's Auxiliary of the Hektoen Institute for Medical Research of the Cook County Hospital. She has also been active in volunteer work with Chicago's Provident Hospital, the Salvation Army, Girl Scouting and American Women's Volunteer Services for Servicemen.

An active church worker, she serves in the Altar and Rosary Society and the Ladies' Sodality of St. Anselm Parish in Chicago.

Her late husband, Edward M. (Mike) Sneed, was a major figure in Chicago and Illinois politics for many years.

Their son, Edward L. Sneed, is an engineer and head of audits and budgets for the Cook County Highway Department.

Mrs. Sneed was born and educated in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky.





VERDA FREEMAN WELCOME

## **VERDA FREEMAN WELCOME**

State Senator, Maryland

Mrs. Verda Freeman Welcome won election to the Maryland State Senate after serving in the House of Delegates.

In both houses she has been responsible for an impressive amount of legislation relating to civil rights and the rights of the poor.

She maneuvered passage of legislation providing \$4,800,000 in grants from the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore for the city's new 300 bed Provident Hospital.

She successfully introduced a bill requiring compensation for people who are jailed or imprisoned by mistake.

Mrs. Welcome also obtained passage of Maryland's law prohibiting segregation and racial discrimination in public accommodations.

One of her most far-reaching battles was the prevention of a gerrymander which would have reduced Negro voting strength in state legislative districts in Baltimore.

She has also been instrumental in reforming insurance finance charges for automobile purchasers.

In addition, she introduced the legislation that repealed Maryland's miscegenation laws. Those laws prohibited marriage between people of different races.

Mrs. Welcome holds a Doctor of Laws degree from Howard University.

She is a member of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Urban League, League of Women Voters, NAACP, National Council of Negro Women and the Maryland Historical Society.

She is on the boards of the Baltimore Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Provident Hospital and the Citizens Housing and Planning Committee.

She is the wife of Dr. Henry C. Welcome. They have a daughter, Mary Sue.